THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government have initiated a scheme for providing one time financial assistance for establishment of New Polytechnics in certain Specially Identified Districts in the country where there is no polytechnic at present. Nine such districts have been identified in Orissa.

Students in rural and urban areas

783. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOIJRCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of students in rural and urban areas in the country who are getting vocational education, university education and technical education;

(b) whether the above percentages in developing countries are more than that in India; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to improve the scenario?

THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Annual enrolment figures of students getting vocational, university and technical education are not collected for rural and urban areas separately.

(c) The University Grants Commission implements various schemes of development assistance to eligible colleges and universities for improving quality of higher education. These schemes aim, *inter-alia*, at improving curriculum, strengthening infrastructure, orientation and in-service training of teachers, and encouraging research.

The scheme of vocationalisation of secondary education at +2 level is being implemented to provide financial assistance to States/UTs to set up administrative structure, area vocational surveys, preparation of curriculum, text-books, work book curriculum guides, training manual, teacher training programmes, strengthening technical support system for research and development, training and evaluation etc. It also provides financial assistance to NGOs and voluntary organizations for implementation of specific innovative projects for conducting short-term courses.

Financial aid to primary education

†784. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are avoiding to provide adequate financial aid to primary education despite imposing two per cent surcharge;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to the tug of war between the Central and State Governments, the chances of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan hanging in mid-air have increased;

(c) if so, the efforts being made by Government in this regard; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if not, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) No Sir. Total allocation made for elementary education, was Rs. 16892.50 crore for the year 2006-07 and Rs. 18626.00 crore for the year 2007-08.

(b) and (d) The funding pattern between Centre and States in the approved programme for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2001 was determined to be 85:15 in the Ninth Five Year Plan, 75:25 in the Tenth Five Year Plan and 50:50 in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Most State Governments have requested the Government of India to continue with the Tenth Plan funding pattern in the Eleventh Plan also.

Working of mid-day meal scheme

†785. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Mid Day Meal Scheme under which students of the schools are provided lunch, is not working satisfactorily;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any discussion was held in this regard in the recently held conference of Education Ministers of States; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to improve the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) No, Sir. No such reports have come to the notice of the Government.

(b) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir. In the Conference of State Education Ministers, the State Ministers agreed on the need to consolidate the initiatives taken over the past 2-½ years on the Mid Day Meal programme and to streamline delivery systems to ensure better management and distribution of food grains and other commodities required for serving a hot cooked meal. States were required to put in place mechanisms that would ensure that schools are not deprived of timely financial assistance to meet the daily requirements of running the programme.

(d) The Guidelines for Mid Day Meal Scheme was revised in 2006 and the following steps have been taken by the Government to improve the scheme:-

(i) The nutritional norm increased from 300 calories to 450 calories and protein content from 8-12 grams to 12 grams per child per school day.

(ii) Central assistance towards cooking cost in the case of States in North-East Region raised from Re. 1.00 per child/school day to Rs. 1.80 per child/school day provided the State Government contibutes a minimum of 20 paise. For other States and UTs, it is raised from Re. 1.00

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.